NISSAN

NISSAN NORTH AMERICA, INC.

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10V-554
(4 Pages)

November 11, 2010

Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
Room W48-302
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Sir:

We are transmitting the enclosed Defect Information Report in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573. A voluntary recall campaign will be initiated and your office provided with the notices. Nissan will notify dealers on November 12, 2010 and begin owner notification in early December 2010. We will include a statement in the Part 577 owner notification concerning reimbursement for the cost of obtaining a pre-notification remedy.

Very truly,

John Gibbons

John Gibbons
Senior Manager,
Technical Compliance

Encl.

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Manufacturer:

Nissan North America, Inc

2. Vehicles Potentially Involved:

Certain 2002-2004 Model year Nissan Frontier and Xterra vehicles:

Model Year	Model	Manufacturing Date
2002-2004	Frontier	July 9, 2001 to October 20, 2004
2002-2004	Xterra	July 9, 2001 to January 6, 2005

No other models produced at other plants in the United States were affected because the steering column lower shaft is a different design.

The name and address of the steering column lower shaft supplier is:

Douglas Autotech Corp.
Automotive and Light Truck
206 Commerce Court
Hopkinsville, KY USA 42241

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Involved:

Model Year	Model	Number of Vehicles (Approximately)
2002-2004	Frontier	239,607
2002-2004	Xterra	260,945

Approximately 500,552 vehicles total.

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect:

Unknown

5. Description of the Defect:

Over time, corrosion may form in the lower steering column joint and limit movement of the joint. The limited movement of this joint may create excessive load on the lower steering column shaft. If the vehicle continues to be driven in this condition, it may lead to cracking of the shaft during low speed maneuvers that require large steering inputs. In an extreme case, the shaft may break which could result in loss of steering control during these low speed maneuvers.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

November 2009 – Transport Canada contacted Nissan Canada inquiring about a steering shaft field report on a Model Year 2002 Frontier vehicle in Canada.

December 2009 through February 2010 – Nissan initiated an investigation into the field incident in Canada and implemented a parts collection program. After initial analysis, Nissan tentatively concluded that the failed part may have been exposed to corrosion due to improper repairs.

March 2010 through June 2010 – Nissan identified additional 2 broken parts in Canada that appeared to have similar corrosion exposure. Due to the age of the vehicles and the limited availability of the incident parts, a collection of in-use parts was implemented to aid in the investigation. Additional in-use parts in normal working condition were collected for analysis.

July 2010 – Nissan received two broken steering column lower shafts from the Brazil market for investigation as returned parts.

July 2010 through September 2010 – Investigation of the returned parts revealed that, over time, corrosion occurred in the steering column joint, and this corrosion could, in certain instances, limit the movement of the joint. This could increase the load on the steering column lower shaft. Further, both instances of steering column malfunctions occurred during low speed maneuvers that required large steering inputs, which placed higher loads on the steering column shaft.

October 2010 through November 2010 – Nissan initiated an investigation in the U.S. and found no incidents of steering column shaft failures due to corrosion.

Given the U.S. population of over 525,000 vehicles with no reported instances of steering shaft failure related to this issue, Nissan believes this

issue is extremely unlikely to occur in the United States. The isolated field reports received from other markets are likely related to some unique environmental conditions not commonly present on U.S. roads combined with higher off pavement usage. Nevertheless, out of abundance of caution, Nissan decided that field action was appropriate in all potentially affected markets

November 4, 2010 - Nissan determined that a safety related defect exists and that a recall campaign should be conducted.

7. Description of Corrective Action:

Owners of all potentially affected vehicles will be notified to take their vehicle to a Nissan dealer. The steering column shaft and joint will be replaced with a shaft of a different design.

8. Copy of Notices:

Copies of all notices will be provided to NHTSA as they become available.